

hortation to all Christians to guard themselves from Revolt and Riot," he is not sorry to hear of the alarm of the papists, but let them fear the wrath of God rather than of man. It is the part of the secular power, which is ordained by God, to set right what is wrong in the land, and, as long as the princes do not take the matter in hand, the people may not. Moreover, "popular insurrection has no reason, does not distinguish between the guilty and the innocent. Therefore, no rebellion is right, however just the cause; more harm than good always comes of it. Be guided, consequently, by the powers that be; as long as they do not move and command, hold heart, hand, and mouth in check, and do nothing of your own accord. If you can influence the powers that be to take action, you may do so. But if they will not, neither may you." This is certainly a tame ending of those warrior words that dart forth like lightning here and there in Luther's earlier works. But it came to be the distinctively Lutheran doctrine on the subject, and proves clearly enough that Luther could never have worked in unison with men like Hutten or Sickingen. In him the primitive Christian strives with the militant champion of the gospel, and the primitive Christian ultimately gains the victory. That his anxiety to avoid anything that would estrange his protectors in high places contributed to the victory is probable enough. His position as the *prottgl* of the Saxon elector precluded participation in any movement which professed enmity to the princes as well as zeal for the gospel. To forfeit the elector's protection would have been to wreck the cause of reform, and thus expediency and principle allied him to the side of the princes against the nobles. Absolutely consistent he cannot be said to have been; eminently sensible and practical he was. If reform was to succeed at all, it could only be under the segis of what was proving to be the strongest body in the empire. In this matter the theologian was far shrewder than the knight. Luther was, in fact/ one of the most wonderful combinations of vehemence and sagacity, theological ardour and worldly prudence—a compound of Erasmus and Hutten, with all the fire of the latter, without his sanguine inclination to theory, with all the circumspection of the former, without his indecision.